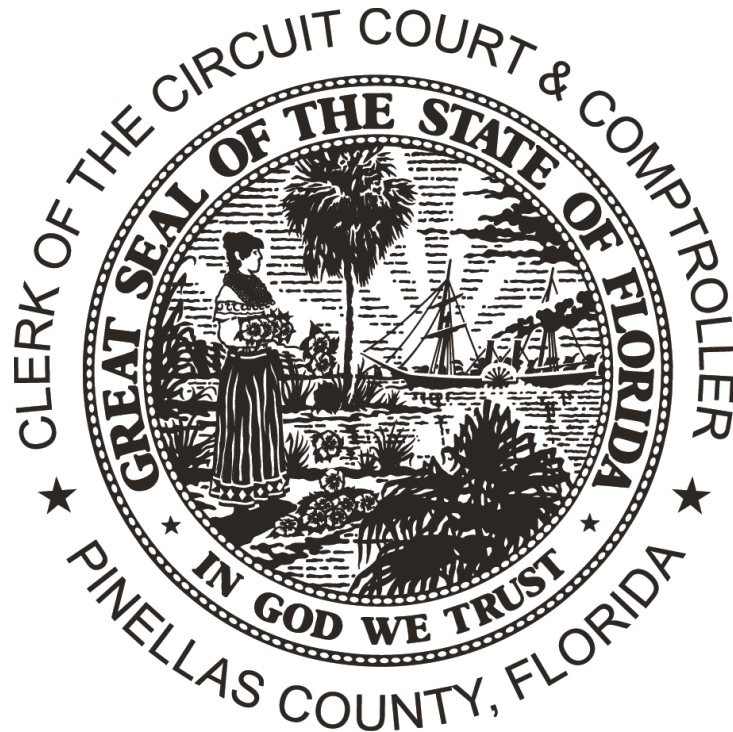


KEN BURKE, C.P.A.
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER
PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA
www.mypinellasclerk.org



Package 4(b)
PACKAGE FEE: \$9.75

**ADOPTION OF AN ADULT
BY A STEPPARENT**

Please contact the Clerk's Office at (727) 464-7000 or visit us online at
www.mypinellasclerk.org for additional information.

ADOPTION OF AN ADULT BY A STEPPARENT

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| FILING FEE: | \$400.00 |
| SUMMONS ISSUANCE FEE: | \$10.00 per summons |
| COPIES REQUIRED: | Originals to the Clerk. 1 Set of copies for service. 1 Set of copies for your records. |
| ADDITIONAL COSTS: | \$3.50 per Acknowledgement (If you do not have your signature notarized in the required spaces prior to filing, the Deputy Clerk can do this for you. Please DO NOT SIGN until a notary or Deputy Clerk instructs you to do so.) |
| SERVICE FEE: | You must contact a private process server, or persons allowed to do service, in the county where service is to be done to obtain their service fees. You can get a list of local process servers from the sheriff by accessing a link through our website at www.MyPinellasClerk.org |

CASE PROGRESSION CHECKLIST STEPPARENT ADOPTION OF ADULT

This checklist has been prepared to assist you with the necessary procedure for bringing your case to final hearing. This checklist lists the minimum requirements and, even though fairly specific, may not be all-inclusive for every case. **It is not intended, and should not be substituted for proper legal advice from an attorney.** You should, however, find that making sure all necessary steps noted below are followed would reduce procedural difficulties and time delays.

I. INITIAL FILING

A. Required forms

- _____ Petition for Adoption of Adult by Stepparent - Form 12.981(c)(1).
- _____ Civil Cover Sheet (local requirement)
- _____ Notice of Related Cases - Form 12.900(h)
- _____ Stepparent Adoption: Consent of Adoptee - Form 12.981(a)(2)
- _____ Stepparent Adoption: Consent of Adult Adoptee's Spouse - Form 12.981(c)(2)
- _____ Summons: Personal Service on an Individual - Form 12.910(a)
AND
- _____ Process Service Memorandum - Form 12.910(b)

The birth parents do not have to consent to the Stepparent Adoption, however there is still a requirement to notice the birth parents. The birth parents must either be personally served with the Petition OR sent the notice of hearing. If you have questions on this part of your case, you should seek legal advice.

B. Required Fees

- _____ Filing fee Paid or fee waiver granted by Court.
- _____ Fees for process service paid directly to a Process Server. The cost for service is set by the process server, the filing party must obtain service procedures including fees from the process server. A complete list of Pinellas County process servers can be obtained online at www.mypinellsclerk.org (If waiver not signed)

II. SERVICE OF PROCESS

A. Personal Service (If party chooses to notify birth parent by Personal Service)

- _____ Summons returned “served” and filed by Clerk – Form 12.910(a).

(If checked, skip to Section III)

_____ Summons returned “not served” and filed by Clerk – Form 12.910(a).

_____ Request clerk issue an alias summons, if address is known.

(If proper service is not obtained, the court cannot hear your case.)

_____ Constructive service also known as “service by publication.” This can be used only if you do not know where the other party is. This can be a very complicated area of the law.

_____ Affidavit of Diligent Search and Inquiry – Form 12.913(b).

_____ Affidavit of Diligent Search – Form 12.913(c).

_____ Notice of Action appropriate for you case. You will need to locate the form in a Law Library.

If constructive service is used, other than granting a dissolution, the court may grant only limited relief. In all cases it is best to have your petition personally served. If proper service is not obtained the court cannot hear your case. This is a complicated area of the law and you may wish to consult with an attorney before using constructive service.

Only now is the case potentially ready for setting for trial/final hearing.

III. SETTING A HEARING

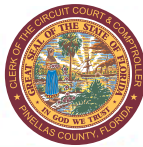
After all paperwork is received by the Clerk's office, the case will be reviewed by the Court's Staff Attorney for accuracy. You will receive correspondence from the Court notifying you of your hearing date or additional items that are required to receive a hearing date.

If thirty (30) days have passed from the date your case was filed and you have not received correspondence from the Court then you may do the following:

_____ Call Family Law at (727)582-7200 to request final hearing. Your court records will be checked for completeness and you will either be given a court calendar date or you will be given further instructions for setting your final hearing.

If you do not properly complete this step, your hearing could be delayed.

Please make arrangements for child care if applicable. Children are not allowed to attend without prior Order, per Fla.Fam.L.R.P. 12.407.



KEN BURKE, CPA

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
& COMPTROLLER
PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

SELF HELP CENTER

The Self Help Centers are the result of a collaborative effort between the Clerk's Office, the Sixth Judicial Circuit, the Community Law Program and the Clearwater Bar Association.

The purpose of the Clerk's Legal Self Help Centers is to assist citizens representing themselves in court (sometimes referred to as pro se persons) who do NOT have a private attorney. Citizens who represent themselves in court and do not already have a private attorney representing them, can now get affordable legal assistance.

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Schedule an appointment to consult with an attorney for a minimum of \$15.00*
(Attorneys may assist with Family Law, Small Claims and Landlord/Tenant matters ONLY.)
- Purchase forms and packets for the civil court actions listed above
- Have documents notarized
- Make copies

Open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.:

- **The Clearwater Self Help Center**
The New Courthouse
315 Court Street
Clearwater, FL 33756
Phone: (727) 464-5150
Fax: (727) 453-3423
 - Appointments may be scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday and/or Friday.
 - A Spanish interpreter provided by the Hispanic Outreach Center is available by appointment at the Clearwater location
- **The St. Petersburg Self Help Center**
The St. Petersburg Judicial Building
545 First Avenue North, Room 103
St Petersburg, FL 33701
Phone: (727) 582-7941
Fax: (727) 582-7945
 - Appointments may be scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and/or Friday.
- **The North County Branch Self Help Center**
29582 U.S. 19 North
Clearwater, FL 33761
Phone: (727) 464-5150
Fax: (727) 453-3423
 - Attorney appointments may be scheduled for Tuesday **only** at this office.

Self Help Center Now Offering Online Scheduling of attorney consultation appointments for pro se litigants that do not already have an attorney. To schedule an appointment online using a credit card, please visit www.mypinellasclerk.org and click on the SELF HELP CENTER link in the top menu.

*Attorney appointments may only be scheduled for a minimum of 15 minutes to a maximum of one hour. All appointments must be scheduled in 15-minute increments, i.e., 15, 30, 45 or 60 minutes at a rate of \$1 (one dollar) per minute, therefore payments will be \$15, \$30, \$45 or \$60 accordingly.

Attorney consultation fees must be paid when the appointment time is scheduled. Payments must be by cash, check, money order or credit card. Refunds will not be issued for missed appointments.

FAMILY LAW FORMS, COMMENTARY, AND INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS

(02/18)

You should read this General Information thoroughly before taking any other steps to file your case or represent yourself in court. Most of this information is **not** repeated in the attached forms. This information should provide you with an overview of the court system, its participants, and its processes. It should be useful whether you want to represent yourself in a pending matter or have a better understanding of the way family court works. **This is not intended as a substitute for legal advice from an attorney. Each case has its own particular set of circumstances, and an attorney may advise you of what is best for you in your individual situation.**

These instructions are not the only place that you can get information about how a family case works. You may want to look at other books for more help. The Florida Statutes, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, and other legal information or books may be found at the public library or in a law library at your county courthouse or a law school in your area. If you are filing a petition for **Name Change** and/or **Adoption**, these instructions may not apply.

If the word(s) is printed in **bold**, this means that the word is being emphasized. Throughout these instructions, you will also find words printed in **bold** and **underlined**. This means that the definitions of these words may be found in the glossary of common family law terms at the end of this general information section.

Commentary

1995 Adoption. To help the many people in family law court cases who do not have attorneys to represent them (pro se litigants), the Florida Supreme Court added these simplified forms and directions to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure. The directions refer to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure or the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. Many of the forms were adapted from the forms accompanying the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. Practitioners should refer to the committee notes for those forms for rule history.

The forms were adopted by the Court pursuant to *Family Law Rules of Procedure*, 667 So. 2d 202 (Fla. 1995); *In re Petition for Approval of Forms Pursuant to Rule 10-1.1(b) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Stepparent Adoption Forms*, 613 So. 2d 900 (Fla. 1992); *Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Approval of Forms*, 581 So. 2d 902 (Fla. 1991).

Although the forms are part of these rules, they are not all inclusive and additional forms, as necessary, should be taken from the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure as provided in Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure. Also, the following notice has been included to strongly encourage individuals to seek the advice, when needed, of an attorney who is a member in good standing of the Florida Bar.

1997 Amendment. In 1997, the Florida Family Law Forms were completely revised to simplify and correct the forms. Additionally, the appendices were eliminated, the instructions contained in the appendices were incorporated into the forms, and the introduction following the Notice to Parties was created. Minor changes were also made to the Notice to Parties set forth below.

NOTICE TO PARTIES WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY WHO IS A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING OF THE FLORIDA BAR

If you have questions or concerns about these forms, instructions, commentary, the use of the forms, or your legal rights, it is strongly recommended that you talk to an attorney. If you do not know an attorney, you should call the lawyer referral service listed in the yellow pages of the telephone book under "Attorney." If you do not have the money to hire an attorney, you should call the legal aid office in your area.

Because the law does change, the forms and information about them may have become outdated. You should be aware that changes may have taken place in the law or court rules that would affect the accuracy of the forms or instructions.

In no event will the Florida Supreme Court, The Florida Bar, or anyone contributing to the production of these forms or instructions be liable for any direct, indirect, or consequential damages resulting from their use.

FAMILY LAW PROCEDURES

Communication with the court. Ex parte communication is communication with the judge with only one party present. Judges are not allowed to engage in ex parte communication except in very limited circumstances, so, absent specific authorization to the contrary, you should not try to speak with or write to the judge in your case unless the other party is present or has been properly notified. **If you have something you need to tell the judge, you must ask for a hearing and give notice to the other party or file a written statement in the court file and send a copy of the written statement to the other party.**

Filing a case. A case begins with the filing of a petition. A petition is a written request to the court for some type of legal action. The person who originally asks for legal action is called the petitioner and remains the petitioner throughout the case.

A petition is given to the clerk of the circuit court, whose office is usually located in the county courthouse or a branch of the county courthouse. A case number is assigned and an official court file is opened. Delivering the petition to the clerk's office is called filing a case. A filing fee is usually required.

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file a petition or other pleadings, motions, and documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your petition electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the circuit within which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

Service of the original petition or supplemental petition. When one party files a petition, motion, or other pleading, the other party must be "served" with a copy of the document. This means that the other party is given proper notice of the pending action(s) and any scheduled hearings. The person

against whom the original legal action is being requested is called the **respondent**, because he or she is expected to respond to the petition. The respondent remains the respondent throughout the case.

Personal service of the petition and summons on the respondent by a deputy sheriff or private process server is required in all **original petitions** and **supplemental petitions**, unless **constructive service** is permitted by law. Personal service may also be required in other actions by some judges.

Constructive Service. If you absolutely do not know where the other party to your case lives or if the other party resides in another state, you may be able to use **constructive service**; however, if constructive service is used, other than granting a divorce, the court may only grant limited relief, which cannot include either alimony or child support. For more information on constructive service, see **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage (No Child or Financial Support)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(1), **Notice of Action for Family Cases with Minor Child(ren)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(2), **Affidavit of Diligent Search and Inquiry**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b), and **Affidavit of Diligent Search**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(c).. Additionally, if the other party is in the military service of the United States, additional steps for service may be required. See, for example, **Memorandum for Certificate of Military Service**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.912(a). In sum, the law regarding constructive service and service on an individual in the military is very complex and you may wish to consult an attorney regarding these issues.

Forms for service of process are included in the Florida Family Law Forms, along with more detailed instructions and information regarding service. The instructions to those forms should be read **carefully** to ensure that you have properly served the other party. **If proper service is not obtained, the court cannot hear your case. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.**

Subsequent Service. Other than the original or supplemental petitions, any time you file additional pleadings or motions in your case, you must provide a copy to the other party and include a **certificate of service**. Likewise, the other party must provide you with copies of everything that he or she files. **If the other party is represented by an attorney, you should serve the attorney unless service upon the other party is required by the court.**

Electronic Service. After the initial service of process of the petitioner or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at www.flcourts.org through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Default. After being served with a petition or counterpetition, the other party has 20 days to file a response. If a response to a petition is not filed, the petitioner may file a **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(a), with the clerk. This means that you may proceed with your case and set a **final hearing**, and a **judge** will make a decision, even if the other party will not cooperate. For more information, see rule 12.080(c), Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

Answer and Counterpetition. After being served, the respondent has 20 days to file an answer admitting or denying each of the allegations contained in the petition. In addition to an answer, the respondent may also file a counterpetition. In a counterpetition, the respondent may request the same or some other relief or action not requested by the petitioner. If the respondent files a counterpetition, the petitioner should then file an **Answer to Counterpetition**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.903(d), and either admit or deny the allegations in the respondent's counterpetition.

Mandatory disclosure. Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires each party in a dissolution of marriage to exchange certain information and documents, and file a **Family Law Financial Affidavit**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b) or (c). Failure to make this required disclosure within the time required by the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure may allow the court to dismiss the case or to refuse to consider the pleadings of the party failing to comply. This requirement also must be met in other family law cases, **except** adoptions, simplified dissolutions of marriage, enforcement proceedings, contempt proceedings, and proceedings for injunctions for domestic or repeat violence. The **Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.932, lists the documents that must be given to the other party. For more information see rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, and the instructions to the **Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.932.

Parenting Plan. If your case involves minor or dependent child(ren), a **Parenting Plan** shall be approved or established by the court. **Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form, 12.995(a), **Safety-Focused Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.995(b), or **Relocation/Long Distance Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.995(c). The Parenting Plan shall be developed and agreed to by the parents and approved by a court.

If the parents cannot agree, or if the agreed Parenting Plan is not approved, the court must establish a Parenting Plan. The Parenting Plan shall contain a time-sharing schedule and should address the issues regarding the child(ren)'s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being.

Setting a hearing or trial. Generally, the court will have hearings on motions, final hearings on uncontested or default cases, and trials on contested cases. Before setting your case for **final hearing** or trial, certain requirements such as completing mandatory disclosure and filing certain papers and having them served on the other party must be met. These requirements vary depending on the type of case and the procedures in your particular jurisdiction. For further information, you should refer to the instructions for the type of form you are filing.

Next, you must obtain a hearing or trial date so that the court may consider your request. You should ask the clerk of court, or **family law intake staff** about the local procedure for setting a hearing or trial, which you should attend. These family law forms contain **orders** and **final judgments**, which the judge may use. You should ask the clerk of court or family law intake staff if you need to bring one of these forms with you to the hearing or trial. If so, you should type or print the heading, including the circuit, county, case number, division, and the parties' names, and leave the rest blank for the judge to complete at your hearing or trial.

The shaded areas below explain different parts of family law forms. Although each form you use may not contain each part explained below, all forms contain a case style which identifies the judicial circuit and county in Florida in which the case is filed, the division within that circuit to which the case is assigned, the parties in the case, and the number of the case. Some, but not all, forms require that the person signing the form state under oath that what he or she claims in the form is true; those particular forms must be signed in the presence of either a deputy clerk of the court or a notary public who witnesses your signature before notarizing the form. Most forms contain a nonlawyer clause which requests certain information be provided by any person who is not licensed to practice law in the State of Florida who has helped you to complete the form.

2

Each form that provides a blank space will have instructions on how to fill in the blank. Please follow all instructions which ask for specific information. Often these instructions appear in *italics*. [

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE (1) JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR (2) COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: (3)
Division: (4)

(5),
Petitioner,
and
(6),
Respondent.

- Line 1** The clerk of court can tell you the number of your judicial circuit. Type or print it here.
- Line 2** Type or print your county name on line (2).
- Line 3** If you are filing an initial petition or pleading, the Clerk of the Court will assign a case number after the case is filed. You should type or print this case number on all papers you file in this case.
- Line 4** The clerk of the court can tell you the name of the division in which your case is being filed, and you should type or print it here. Divisions vary from court to court. For example, your case may be filed in the civil division, the family division, or the juvenile division.
- Line 5** Type or print the legal name of the person who originally filed the case on line 5. This person is the petitioner because he/she is the one who filed the original petition.
- Line 6** Type or print the other party's legal name on line 6. The other party is the respondent because he/she is responding to the petition.

Some forms require that your signature be witnessed. If so, you must sign the form in the presence of a **notary public** or deputy clerk (employee of the clerk of the court's office). When signing the form, you must have a valid photo identification unless the notary knows you personally. You should completely fill in all lines (1 & 3–8) except 2 with the requested information, if applicable. **Line 2, the signature line,**

must be signed in the presence of the notary public or deputy clerk. DO NOT SIGN OR FILL IN THE PART OF THE FORM WHICH ASKS FOR THE NOTARY'S OR CLERK'S SIGNATURE. This section of the form is to be completed by either the deputy clerk or the notary public who is witnessing your signature.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this petition and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____ (1)

_____ (2)

(2)

Signature of Petitioner

Printed Name:

_____ (3)

Address:

_____ (4)

City, State, Zip: _____ (5)

Telephone Number: _____ (6)

Fax Number: _____ (7)

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____ (8)

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

{Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.}

_____ Personally known

_____ Produced identification

_____ Type of identification produced _____

Non-lawyer Clause. The section below should be completed by anyone who helps you fill out these forms but is **not** an attorney who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar, which means that he or she is not licensed to practice law in Florida.

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: {either Petitioner or Respondent; or Husband or Wife}

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____ (1) _____,
{name of business} _____ (2) _____,
{address} _____ (3) _____,
{city} _____ (4) _____, {state} _____ (5) _____, {zip code} _____ (6) _____, {telephone number} _____ (7) _____.

Line 1 The nonlawyer who helps you should type or print his or her name on line 1.

Lines 2–7 The nonlawyer’s business name, address, (including street, city, state, zip code, and telephone number) should be typed or printed on lines 2–7.

In addition, a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), should be completed if a nonlawyer assists you. The disclosure is available as a family law form and should be completed before the nonlawyer helps you. This is to be sure that you understand the role and limitations of a nonlawyer. You and the nonlawyer should keep a copy of this disclosure for your records.

FAMILY LAW GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Note: The following definitions are intended to be helpful, BUT they are not intended to constitute legal advice or address every possible meaning of the term(s) contained in this glossary.

Affidavit - a written statement in which the facts stated are sworn or affirmed to be true.

Alimony-spousal support which may be ordered by the court in a proceeding for dissolution of marriage. Types of alimony include: bridge-the-gap, durational, rehabilitative, or retroactive, and may be either temporary or permanent. The court may order periodic payments, payments in lump sum, or both. In determining whether to award alimony, the court must determine whether either party has an actual need for alimony and whether the other party has the ability to pay. The court must consider the factors set forth in section 61.08, Florida Statutes, and must make certain written findings. An alimony award may not leave the paying party with significantly less net income than that of the receiving party without written findings of exceptional circumstances.

Answer - written response by a respondent that states whether he or she admits (agrees with) or denies (disagrees with) the allegations in the petition. Any allegations not specifically denied are considered to be admitted.

Appeal - asking a district court of appeal to review the decision in your case. There are strict procedural and time requirements for filing an appeal.

Asset - everything owned by you or your spouse, including property, cars, furniture, bank accounts, jewelry, life insurance policies, businesses, or retirement plans. An asset may be marital or nonmarital, but that distinction is for the court to determine if you and your spouse do not agree.

Attorney - a person with special education and training in the field of law who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar and licensed to practice law in Florida. An attorney is the only person who is allowed to give you legal advice. An attorney may file your case and represent you in court, or just advise you of your rights before you file your own case. In addition to advising you of your rights, an attorney may tell you what to expect and help prepare you for court. In family law matters, you are not entitled to a court-appointed lawyer, like a public defender in a criminal case. However, legal assistance is often available for those who are unable to hire a private attorney. You may consult the yellow pages of the telephone directory for a listing of legal aid or lawyer referral services in your area, or ask your local clerk of court or family law intake staff what services are available in your area. You may also obtain information from the Florida Supreme Court's Internet site located at <http://www.flcourts.org>.

Bond - money paid to the clerk of court by one party in a case, to be held and paid to an enjoined party in the event that the first party causes loss or damage of property as a result of wrongfully enjoining the other party.

Beneficiary Designation-Florida law provides that a beneficiary designation made by or on behalf of a party providing for the payment or transference of an asset or benefit upon his or her death to the other spouse is void when the final judgment dissolving or declaring a marriage invalid is signed, unless the final judgment specifically states otherwise. Federal law and other statutory provisions may also apply. This includes, but is not limited to, such assets as life insurance policies, annuities, employee benefit plans, individual retirement accounts, and payable-on-death accounts. Whether or not to continue a beneficiary designation is a complex area of the law and you may wish to consult with an attorney.

Bridge-the-Gap Alimony-spousal support which is ordered to assist a party to make the transition from being married to being single. Bridge-the-Gap alimony is designed to assist a party with legitimate, identifiable short-time needs; its length cannot exceed two years and it cannot be modified.

Central Depository-the office of the clerk of court that is responsible for collecting and disbursing court ordered alimony and child support payments. The depository also keeps payment records and files judgments if support is not paid.

Certificate of Service - a document that must be filed whenever a form you are using does not contain a statement for you to fill in showing to whom you are sending copies of the form. Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914 is the certificate of service form and contains additional instructions.

Certified Copy - a copy of an order or final judgment, certified by the clerk of the circuit court to be an authentic copy.

Certified Mail - mail which requires the receiving party to sign as proof that they received it.

Child Support - money paid from one parent to the other for the benefit of their dependent or minor child(ren).

Clerk of the Circuit Court - elected official in whose office papers are filed, a case number is assigned, and case files are maintained. The clerk's office usually is located in the county courthouse.

Concurrent Custody-(for the purposes of a petition filed pursuant to chapter 751, Florida Statutes) means that an eligible extended family member is awarded custodial rights to care for a child or children concurrently with the child(ren)'s parent or parents.

Constructive Service - notification of the other party by newspaper publication or posting of notice at designated places when the other party cannot be located for personal service. You may also be able to use constructive service when the other party lives in another state. Constructive service is also called "service by publication." However, when constructive service is used, the relief the Court may grant is limited; that relief cannot include either alimony or child support. For more information on service, see the instructions for Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Forms 12.910(a) and 12.913(b) and Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Forms 12.913(a)(1) and (2).

Contested Issues - any or all issues upon which the parties are unable to agree and which must be resolved by the judge at a hearing or trial.

Contingent Asset - an asset that you **may** receive or get later, such as income, tax refund, accrued vacation or sick leave, a bonus, or an inheritance.

Contingent Liability - a liability that you **may** owe later, such as payments for lawsuits, unpaid taxes, or debts that you have agreed or guaranteed to pay if someone else does not.

Counterpetition - a written request to the court for legal action, which is filed by a respondent after being served with a petition.

Custody Order – a judgment or order incorporating a Parenting Plan is a child custody determination for the purposes of the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, the International Child Abduction Remedies Act, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11601 et seq., the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act, and the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction enacted at the Hague on October 25, 1980.

Default - a failure of a party to respond to the pleading of another party. This failure to respond may allow the court to decide the case without input from the party who did not appear or respond.

Delinquent - late.

Dependent Child(ren) - child(ren) who depend on their parent(s) for support either because they are under the age of 18, have a mental or physical disability that prevents them from supporting themselves, or are in high school, between the ages of 18 and 19, and performing in good faith with a reasonable expectation of graduation before the age of 19.

Deputy Clerk - an employee of the office of the clerk of court, which is usually located in the county courthouse or a branch of the county courthouse.

Dissolution of Marriage - divorce; a court action to end a marriage.

Durational Alimony-spousal support which is ordered to provide economic assistance for a set period of time following a marriage of short or moderate duration or following a marriage of long duration if there is no ongoing need for support on a permanent basis. Durational alimony terminates upon the death of either party or upon remarriage of the party receiving support. It may be modified or terminated, but cannot exceed the length of a marriage.

Electronic Communication – Contact, other than face-to-face contact, facilitated by tools such as telephones, electronic mail or email, webcams, video-conferencing equipment and software or other wired or wireless technologies, or other means of communication to supplement fact-to face contact between a parent and that parent’s minor child.

Enjoined - prohibited by the court from doing a specific act.

Ex Parte - communication with the judge by only one party. In order for a judge to speak with either party, the other party must have been properly notified and have an opportunity to be heard. If you have something you wish to tell the judge, you should ask for a hearing or file information in the clerk of court’s office, with certification that a copy was sent to the other party.

Extended Family Member-(for the purposes of a petition filed pursuant to chapter 751, Florida Statutes) is a person who is either:

- 1) A relative of a minor child within the third degree by blood or marriage to the parent; OR
- 2) The stepparent of a minor child if the stepparent is currently married to the parent of the child and is not a party in a pending dissolution, separate maintenance, domestic violence, or other civil or criminal proceeding in any court of competent jurisdiction involving one or both of the child’s parents as an adverse party.

Family Law Intake Staff - a court’s employee(s) who is (are) available to assist you in filing a family law case. Family law intake staff are not attorneys and cannot give legal advice. They may only assist you with filling out the form(s). Your local clerk’s office can tell you if your county has such assistance available.

Filing - delivering a petition, response, motion, or other pleading in a court case to the clerk of court’s office.

Filing Fee - an amount of money, set by law, that the petitioner must pay when filing a case. If you cannot afford to pay the fee, you must file an **Application for Determination of Civil Indigent Status**, to ask the clerk to file your case without payment of the fee. This form can be obtained from the clerk’s office.

Final Hearing - trial in your case.

Financial Affidavit - a sworn statement that contains information regarding your income, expenses, assets, and liabilities.

Final Judgment - a written document signed by a judge and recorded in the clerk of the circuit court’s office that contains the judge’s decision in your case.

Guardian ad Litem - a neutral person who may be appointed by the court to evaluate or investigate your child’s situation, and file a report with the court about what is in the best interests of your child(ren). Guardians do not “work for” either party. The guardian may interview the parties, visit their homes,

visit the child(ren)'s school(s) and speak with teachers, or use other resources to make their recommendation.

Hearing - a legal proceeding before a judge or designated officer (general magistrate or hearing officer) on a motion.

Health Insurance - coverage under a fee-for-service arrangement, health care maintenance organization, or preferred provider organization, and other types of coverage available to either parent, under which medical services could be provided to a minor or dependent child.

Judge - an elected official who is responsible for deciding matters on which you and the other parties in your case are unable to agree. A judge is a neutral person who is responsible for ensuring that your case is resolved in a manner which is fair, equitable, and legal. **A judge is prohibited by law from giving you or the other party any legal advice, recommendations, or other assistance, and may not talk to either party unless both parties are present, represented, or at a properly scheduled hearing.**

Judicial Assistant - the judge's personal staff assistant.

Liabilities - everything owed by you or your spouse, including mortgages, credit cards, or car loans. A liability may be marital or nonmarital, but that distinction is for the court to determine if you and your spouse do not agree.

Lump Sum Alimony - money ordered to be paid by one spouse to another in a limited number of payments, often a single payment.

Mandatory Disclosure - items that must be disclosed by both parties except those exempted from disclosure by Florida Family Law Rule 12.285.

Marital Asset - generally, anything that you and/or your spouse acquired or received (by gift or purchase) during the marriage. For example, something you owned before your marriage **may** be nonmarital. An asset may only be determined to be marital by agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Marital Liability - generally, any debt that you and/or your spouse incurred during the marriage. A debt may only be determined to be nonmarital by agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Mediator - a person who is trained and certified to assist parties in reaching an agreement before going to court. Mediators do not take either party's side and are not allowed to give legal advice. They are only responsible for helping the parties reach an agreement and putting that agreement into writing. In some areas, mediation of certain family law cases may be required before going to court.

Modification - a change made by the court in an order or final judgment.

Motion - a request made to the court, other than a petition.

No Contact - a court order directing a party not speak to, call, send mail to, visit, or go near his or her spouse, ex-spouse, child(ren), or other family member.

Nonlawyer - a person who is not a member in good standing of The Florida Bar.

Nonmarital Asset - generally, anything owned separately by you or your spouse. An asset may only be determined to be nonmarital by either agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Nonmarital Liability - generally, any debt that you or your spouse incurred before your marriage or since your separation. A debt may only be determined to be nonmarital by either agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Nonparty - a person who is not the petitioner or respondent in a court case.

Notary Public - a person authorized to witness signatures on court related forms.

Obligee - a person to whom money, such as child support or alimony, is owed.

Obligor - a person who is ordered by the court to pay money, such as child support or alimony.

Order - a written decision, signed by a judge and filed in the clerk of the circuit court's office that contains the judge's decision on part of your case, usually on a motion.

Original Petition - see **Petition**.

Parenting Course - a class that teaches parents how to help their child(ren) cope with divorce and other family issues.

Parenting Plan – a document created to govern the relationship between the parents relating to the decisions that must be made regarding the minor child(ren). The Parenting Plan must contain a time-sharing schedule for the parents and child(ren) and shall address the issues concerning the minor child(ren). The issues concerning the minor child(ren) may include, but are not limited to, the child(ren)'s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being. In creating the Plan, all circumstances between the parents, including their historic relationship, domestic violence, and other factors must be taken into consideration. The Parenting Plan must be developed and agreed to by the parents and approved by the court. If the parents cannot agree to a Parenting Plan, or if the parents agreed to a plan that is not approved by the court, a Parenting Plan will be established by the court with or without the use of **parenting plan recommendations**.

Parenting Plan Recommendation – A nonbinding recommendation concerning one or more elements of a Parenting Plan made by a court-appointed mental health practitioner or other professional designated pursuant to either section 61.20 or 61.401, Florida Statutes, or Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.363.

Party - a person involved in a court case, either as a petitioner or respondent.

Paternity Action - A lawsuit used to determine whether a designated individual is the father of a specific child or children.

Payor - an employer or other person who provides income to an obligor.

Permanent Alimony - spousal support ordered to provide for the needs and necessities of life as they were established during the marriage for a party who lacks the financial ability to meet his or her needs and necessities after dissolution of marriage. Permanent alimony is paid at a specified, periodic rate until: modification by a court order; the death of either party; or the remarriage of the party receiving alimony, whichever occurs first. Permanent alimony requires consideration of the factors set forth in section 61.08(2), Florida Statutes, and must include certain written findings by the court.

Personal Service - when a summons and a copy of a petition (or other pleading) that has been filed with the court are delivered by a deputy sheriff or private process server to the other party. Personal service is required for all petitions and supplemental petitions.

Petition - a written request to the court for legal action, which begins a court case.

Petitioner - the person who originally files a petition that begins a court case. The Petitioner remains the Petitioner throughout the duration of the case.

Pleading - a formal, written statement of exactly what a party wants the court to do in a lawsuit or court action.

Pro Se or Self-Represented Litigant - a person who appears in court without the assistance of a lawyer.

Pro Se Coordinator - see **Family Law Intake Staff**.

Rehabilitative Alimony - spousal support ordered to be paid for a limited period of time to allow one of the parties an opportunity to complete a plan of education or training, according to a rehabilitative plan accepted by the court, so that he or she may better support himself or herself after dissolution of marriage.

Relocation- a change in the location of the principal residence of a parent or other person in accordance with section 61.13001, Florida Statutes.

Respondent - the person who is served with a petition requesting some legal action against him or her. The Respondent remains the Respondent throughout the duration of the case.

Scientific Paternity Testing - a medical test to determine the biological father of a child

Service - the delivery of legal documents to a party. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Shared Parental Responsibility - an arrangement under which both parents have full parental rights and responsibilities for their child(ren), and the parents make major decisions affecting the welfare of the child(ren) jointly. Shared Parental Responsibility is presumptive in Florida.

Sole Parental Responsibility - a parenting arrangement under which the responsibility for the minor child(ren) is given to one parent by the court, with or without rights of time-sharing to the other parent.

State Disbursement Unit- the unit established and operated by the Title IV-D agency to provide one central address for the collection and disbursement of child support payments made in both Department of Revenue and non-Department of Revenue cases, in which the obligation is paid through an income deduction order.

Supervised Time-Sharing- a parenting arrangement under which time-sharing between a parent and his or her child(ren) is supervised by either a friend, family member, or a supervised visitation center.

Supplemental Petition - a petition that may be filed by either party after the judge has made a decision in a case and a final judgment or order has been entered. For example, a supplemental petition may be used to request that the court modify the previously entered final judgment or order.

Supportive Relationship-a relationship, defined in section 61.14(1)(b)1, Florida Statutes, existing between an obligee who receives alimony and a person with whom that obligee resides.

Time-Sharing Schedule – a timetable that must be included in the Parenting Plan that specifies the time, including overnights and holidays that a minor child or children will spend with each parent. The time-sharing schedule shall either be developed and agreed to by the parents of a minor child or children and is approved by the court, or established by the court if the parents cannot agree, or if their agreed-upon schedule is not approved by the court.

Trial - the final hearing in a contested case.

Uncontested - any and all issues on which the parties are able to agree and which are part of a marital settlement agreement.

Administrative Office of the Courts
The Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida
(727)582-7200

How can I keep my address confidential in a court case if I am in fear of domestic violence?

Question: I am in fear of domestic violence from my spouse or another party in my court case. What do I have to do if I want to keep my address confidential?

Answer: In a domestic or repeat violence injunction case, the clerk of court has procedures in place to keep your address confidential. If a party in the injunction case properly files their pleadings at the domestic violence desk, the clerk will send you the copies of their pleadings so that you are properly notified of the filing and the hearing.

In most types of proceedings, the confidential address procedure through the clerk is not available because parties are required to copy other parties with pleadings filed in the case. In addition to sending copies of all pleadings, the moving party must prepare a notice of hearing and send it to all parties in the case.

If you do not want the other party(s) to have your home address you can consider the following:

1. Obtain a post office box. The post office cannot reveal the true address of a post office box owner, who is a private person and not a business, without a court order.
2. Ask your employer if you may use your work address to receive mail on your court case and as your service address for personal service.
3. If you are a victim of domestic violence or the guardian of an adult, minor child or impaired person who is a victim of domestic violence, you may inquire about the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) with the Florida Attorney General's Office. You will be interviewed for acceptance into the program. Please call the Florida Attorney General at 1-800-226-6667 (local # 850-414-3300, TDD/TTY users may use the Florida Relay service at 1-800-955-8771) for information on setting up the interview.

How the program works: If you are accepted into the ACP program you will be given a substitute address to use for your mailing and legal process service address. The Attorney General will be the only one who has your real address. All first class mail sent, or legal process served, to the substitute ACP address will be forwarded to you by the Attorney General's Office. Your acceptance into the program is for a set period of time, is revocable, and must be renewed upon expiration. If you are accepted into the ACP program you will be given an identification card. It is your responsibility to determine who will get your actual address and who will get your ACP address. Government agencies are required to accept your ACP address but if you have previously given your actual address, they may not have to replace it with your substitute address.

The courts may order you to reveal your true address during a court case. Be aware that many government agencies share information and if you have given your true address to one, it may be shared with other agencies. Federal agencies and private businesses are not required to accept your ACP address but many will do so. Certain agencies, such as law enforcement, have the right to access your true address for certain reasons. A false or incorrect application under this program constitutes a second degree misdemeanor.

| South Pinellas County(St. Petersburg) | | |
|---|--|---|
| Name | Address | Telephone Number(s) or other information |
| Courts Information and Resource Center | Family law procedural assistance & information on approved forms. | 727-582-7200 (walk-in assistance is not available) Office hours 8 a.m. to Noon, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday. |
| Lawyer Referral Service | | 727-821-5450 (30 min. consultation with a lawyer for a small fee) |
| Legal Aid St. Petersburg | Bay Area Legal Services-West 2600-9 th Street North, Ste. 401 St. Petersburg, FL 33704 | Bay Area Legal Services-West: 727-490-4040 Gulfcoast Legal Services: 727-821-0726 Community Law Program: 727-582-7402 |
| St. Petersburg Courthouse | 545-1 st Avenue North St. Petersburg, FL 33701 | Clerk of Court: 727-464-7000 Child Support Automated Information Line: 727-464-4845 |
| Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs | Court ordered civil mediation and arbitration services. | Mediation/Arbitration: 727-464-4943, Family Mediation: 727-464-4947 |
| Clerk of Court Self Help Center (St. Petersburg) | Legal assistance by appointment for a fee | St. Petersburg Courthouse, 545-1 st Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701 phone: 727-582-7941 , call for information. |
| North Pinellas County(Clearwater) | | |
| Clearwater Courthouse | 315 Court Street Clearwater, FL 33756 | Clerk of Court: 727-464-7000 Child Support Automated Information Line: 727-464-4845 |
| Courts Information and Resource Center | Family law procedural assistance & information on approved forms. | 727-582-7200 (walk-in assistance is not available) Office hours 8 a.m. to Noon, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday. |
| Lawyer Referral Service | | 727-461-4880 (30 minute consultation for a small fee) |
| Legal Aid Clearwater | Gulfcoast Legal Services 2189 Cleveland St., Bldg G, Ste.210 Clearwater, FL 33765 | 727-443-0657 |
| Pinellas County Information | 315 Court Street Clearwater, FL 33756 | 727-464-3000 |
| Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs | Court ordered mediation and arbitration services. | Mediation/Arbitration: 727-464-4943, Family Mediation: 727-464-4947 |
| Clerk of Court Self Help Center (Clearwater) | Legal assistance by appointment for a fee | Clearwater Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, FL 33756 phone: 727-464-5150 call for information. |
| Pasco County (New Port Richey & Dade City) | | |
| Clerk of Court-Civil (New Port Richey) | 7530 Little Road New Port Richey, FL 34654 | 727-847-8176 727-847-2411 |
| Clerk of Court-Civil (Dade City) | 38053 Live Oak Avenue Dade City, FL 33523-3805 | 352-521-4517 |
| Legal Aid-Pasco | Bay Area Legal Services Offices in New Port Richey and Dade City | New Port Richey: 727-847-5494 Dade City: 352-567-9044 |
| Pasco County General Information | 38053 Live Oak Avenue Dade City, FL 33523-3805 | 352-521-4274 |
| Miscellaneous | | |
| Florida Dept. of Revenue | Many offices statewide | Child Support Enforcement: 850-488-5437 |
| 211 | Information and referral for a variety of state, local and private services. | Dial 211 (24 hours per day, 7 days per week) Multilingual Internet page: http://www.211tampabay.com |
| Internet Pages | Florida Supreme Court http://www.flcourts.org , Pinellas County Clerk of Court http://www.mypinellasclerk.org Sixth Judicial Circuit Court http://www.jud6.org , Sixth Judicial Circuit Family Division http://www.jud6.org/GeneralInfo/AboutTheCircuit/AOC/Courtprograms/familyLaw/familylaw.htm | |
| State of Florida FLSDU | SDU P.O. Box 8500 Tallahassee, FL 32314-8500 | For income deducted support payments 1-877-769-0251 Toll free (you will need your case number and social security number) |

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM
12.981(c)(1)
PETITION FOR ADOPTION OF ADULT BY STEPPARENT (11/15)**

When should this form be used?

This form should be used when a stepparent is adopting his or her spouse's adult child. You must obtain the written consent of the adult child to be adopted, as well as the written consent of his or her spouse (if married).

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. The name to be given to the adoptee **after** the adoption should be used in the heading of the petition. The stepparent is the petitioner, because he or she is the one who is asking the court for legal action. You must have your signature witnessed by a notary public or deputy clerk.

After completing this form, you should file the original with the clerk of the circuit court in the county where either you or the adoptee live and keep a copy for your records.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file a petition or other pleadings electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your petition, or other pleading or document electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

What should I do next?

For your case to proceed, you must have the written consent of the adoptee, and his or her spouse if married. Consent of the birth parent is not required, but written notice of the final hearing on the adoption must be provided to the parents, if any, or proof of service of process must be filed showing notice has been served on the parents. If you know where they live, you must use personal service. If you absolutely do not know where they live, you may use constructive service. For more information about personal and constructive service, you should refer the **General Instructions for Self-Represented Litigants** found at the beginning of these forms and the instructions to Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Forms 12.910(a) and 12.913(b) and Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a). However, the law regarding constructive service is very complex and you may wish to consult an attorney regarding that issue.

When you have filed all of the required forms and met the requirements for consent as outlined above, you are ready to set a hearing on your petition. You should check with the clerk of court, family law intake staff, or judicial assistant to set a final hearing, and notify the other party(ies) using a **Notice of Hearing (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.923, or other appropriate notice of hearing form.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at www.flcourts.org through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms. See Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, and Florida Family Law Rule 12.200(a)(2) for further information.

Special notes...

With this petition you must file the following forms:

- **Stepparent Adoption: Consent of Adoptee**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.981(a)(2)
- **Stepparent Adoption: Consent of Adult Adoptee's Spouse**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.981(c)(2), if the adoptee is married

THIS ADOPTION MAY AFFECT THE ADOPTEE'S INHERITANCE.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also

must put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF

_____,
{use name to be given to the minor child} Adoptee.

PETITION FOR ADOPTION OF ADULT BY STEPPARENT

Petitioner, {full legal name} _____, files
this petition for adoption of the above-named adult, pursuant to Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, and states:

1. This is an action for adoption of an adult by the adult's stepparent, Petitioner.
2. I desire to adopt {adult's full legal name} _____,
who was born on {date} _____, at {city, county, and state} _____.
3. I desire to adopt the adult because: _____
4. I am _____ years old, and I have resided at {address} _____,
_____, Florida for _____ years.
5. The adoptee's name shall be: _____
6. The adoptee's birth parents are:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| _____ Father's Name | _____ Birth date |
| _____ Address | |
| _____ Mother's Name | _____ Birth date |
| _____ Address | |

7. **Notice.** Notice to the birth parents was made by: _____.

8. **Consent.**

*{Indicate **all** that apply}*

a. _____ The consent of the adoptee is attached.

b. _____ The adoptee is married to *{full legal name of adoptee's spouse}*, _____
_____ and the consent of the spouse is attached.

c. _____ The adoptee is not married.

9. Written notice of this final hearing was provided to the parents or proof of service of process showing notice has been served on the parents is attached.

WHEREFORE, I request that this Court enter a Final Judgment of Adoption of the Adult by Petitioner Stepparent and change the name of the adoptee.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this petition and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____

Signature of Party

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

{Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.}

_____ Personally known

_____ Produced identification

Type of identification produced _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the petitioner.

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,

{name of business} _____,

{address} _____,

{city} _____, *{state}* _____, *{zip code}* _____, *{telephone number}* _____.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE
FORM 12.928
COVER SHEET FOR FAMILY COURT CASES (11/20)**

When should this form be used?

The Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases and the information contained in it does not replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other documents as required by law. This form shall be filed by the petitioner/party opening or reopening a case for the use of the clerk of the circuit court for the purpose of reporting judicial workload data pursuant to Florida Statutes section 25.075.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. The petitioner must file this cover sheet with the first pleading or motion filed to open or reopen a case in all domestic and juvenile cases.

What should I do next?

Follow these instructions for completing the form:

- I. Case Style. Enter the name of the court, the appropriate case number assigned at the time of filing of the original petition, the name of the judge assigned (if applicable), and the name (last, first, middle initial) of the petitioner(s) and respondent(s).
- II. Type of Action /Proceeding. Place a check beside the proceeding you are initiating. If you are filing more than one type of proceeding, (such as a modification and an enforcement proceeding) against the same party at the same time, then you must complete a separate cover sheet for each action being filed.
 - (A) Initial Action/Petition
 - (B) Reopening Case. If you check "Reopening Case," indicate whether you are filing a modification or supplemental petition or an action for enforcement by placing a check beside the appropriate action/petition.
 1. Modification/Supplemental Petition
 2. Motion for Civil Contempt/ Enforcement
 3. Other – All reopening actions not involving modification/supplemental petitions or petition enforcement.
- III. Type of Case. Place a check beside the appropriate case. If the case fits more than one category, select the most definitive. Definitions of the categories are provided below.
 - (A) Simplified Dissolution of Marriage- petitions for the termination of marriage pursuant to Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.105.
 - (B) Dissolution of Marriage - petitions for the termination of marriage pursuant to Chapter 61, Florida Statutes, other than simplified dissolution.

- (C) Domestic Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against domestic violence pursuant to section 741.30, Florida Statutes.
- (D) Dating Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against dating violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.
- (E) Repeat Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against repeat violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.
- (F) Sexual Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against sexual violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.
- (G) Stalking-all matters relating to injunctions for protection against stalking pursuant to section 784.0485, Florida Statutes
- (H) Support - IV-D - all matters relating to child or spousal support in which an application for assistance has been filed with the Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement under Title IV-D, Social Security Act, except for such matters relating to dissolution of marriage petitions (sections 409.2564, 409.2571, and 409.2597, Florida Statutes), paternity, or UIFSA.
- (I) Support-Non IV-D - all matters relating to child or spousal support in which an application for assistance has **not** been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.
- (J) UIFSA- IV-D - all matters relating to Chapter 88, Florida Statutes, in which an application for assistance has been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.
- (K) UIFSA - Non IV-D - all matters relating to Chapter 88, Florida Statutes, in which an application for assistance has **not** been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.
- (L) Other Family Court - all matters involving time-sharing and/or parenting plans relating to minor child(ren), support unconnected with dissolution of marriage, annulment, delayed birth certificates pursuant to Florida Statutes section 382.0195, expedited affirmation of parental status pursuant to Florida Statutes section 742.16, termination of parental rights proceedings pursuant to Florida Statutes section 63.087, declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, post-marital agreements, or other matters not included in the categories above.
- (M) Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 63 - all matters relating to adoption pursuant to Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, excluding any matters arising out of Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (N) Name Change - all matters relating to name change, pursuant to section 68.07, Florida Statutes.
- (O) Paternity/Disestablishment of Paternity – all matters relating to paternity pursuant to Chapter 742, Florida Statutes.
- (P) Juvenile Delinquency - all matters relating to juvenile delinquency pursuant to Chapter 985, Florida Statutes.
- (Q) Petition for Dependency - all matters relating to petitions for dependency.
- (R) Shelter Petition – all matters relating to shelter petitions pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (S) Termination of Parental Rights Arising Out Of Chapter 39 – all matters relating to termination of parental rights pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (T) Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 39 – all matters relating to adoption pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (U) CINS/FINS – all matters relating to children in need of services (and families in need of services) pursuant to Chapter 984, Florida Statutes.

- (V) Petition for Temporary or Concurrent Custody by Extended Family-all matters relating to petitions for temporary or concurrent custody pursuant to Chapter 751.
- (W) Emancipation of a Minor-all matters relating to emancipation of a minor pursuant to Chapter 743.

ATTORNEY OR PARTY SIGNATURE. Sign the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases. Print legibly the name of the person signing the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases. Attorneys must include a Florida Bar number. Insert the date the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases is signed. Signature is a certification that filer has provided accurate information on the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases.

Nonlawyer Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

A copy of this form must be filed with the court and served on the other party or his or her attorney. The copy you are serving to the other party must be either mailed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to the opposing party or his or her attorney on the same day indicated on the certificate of service. If it is mailed, it must be postmarked on the date indicated in the certificate of service.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you must review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at www.flcourts.org through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by email, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General), Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.**

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read “General Information for Self-Represented Litigants” found at the beginning of these forms. For further information, see Rule 12.100, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

COVER SHEET FOR FAMILY COURT CASES

I. Case Style

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Judge: _____

Petitioner

and

Respondent

II. Type of Action/Proceeding. Place a check beside the proceeding you are initiating. If you are filing more than one type of proceeding (such as a modification and an enforcement proceeding) against the same party at the same time, then you must complete a separate cover sheet for each action being filed. **If you are reopening a case, choose one of the three options below it.**

- (A) ____ Initial Action/Petition
- (B) ____ Reopening Case
 - 1. ____ Modification/Supplemental Petition
 - 2. ____ Motion for Civil Contempt/Enforcement
 - 3. ____ Other

III. Type of Case. If the case fits more than one type of case, select the most definitive.

- (A) ____ Simplified Dissolution of Marriage
- (B) ____ Dissolution of Marriage
- (C) ____ Domestic Violence
- (D) ____ Dating Violence
- (E) ____ Repeat Violence
- (F) ____ Sexual Violence
- (G) ____ Stalking
- (H) ____ Support IV-D (Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
- (I) ____ Support Non-IV-D (**not** Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
- (J) ____ UIFSA IV-D (Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
- (K) ____ UIFSA Non-IV-D (**not** Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
- (L) ____ Other Family Court
- (M) ____ Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 63
- (N) ____ Name Change
- (O) ____ Paternity/Disestablishment of Paternity
- (P) ____ Juvenile Delinquency

- (Q) ____ Petition for Dependency
 (R) ____ Shelter Petition
 (S) ____ Termination of Parental Rights Arising Out Of Chapter 39
 (T) ____ Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 39
 (U) ____ CINS/FINS
 (V) ____ Petition for Temporary or Concurrent Custody by Extended Family
 (W) ____ Emancipation of a Minor

IV. Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d) requires that a Notice of Related Cases Form, Family Law Form 12.900(h), be filed with the initial pleading/petition by the filing attorney or self-represented litigant in order to notify the court of related cases. Is Form 12.900(h) being filed with this Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases and initial pleading/petition?

____ No, to the best of my knowledge, no related cases exist.
 ____ Yes, all related cases are listed on Family Law Form 12.900(h).

ATTORNEY OR PARTY SIGNATURE

I CERTIFY that the information I have provided in this cover sheet is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature _____ FL Bar No.: _____
 Attorney or party (Bar number, if attorney)

 (Type or print name) (E-mail Address(es))

 Date

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [fill in all blanks]

This form was prepared for the: {choose only **one**} ____ Petitioner ____ Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,
 {name of business} _____,
 {address} _____,
 {city} _____, {state} _____, {zip code} _____, {telephone number} _____.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.900(h), NOTICE OF RELATED CASES (11/13)

When should this form be used?

Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d) requires the **petitioner** in a family law case to file with the court a notice of related cases, if any. Your circuit may also require this form to be filed even if there are no related cases. A case is considered related if

- it involves the same parties, children, or issues and is pending when the family law case is filed; or
- it affects the court's jurisdiction to proceed; or
- an order in the related case may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or
- an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier case.

This form is used to provide the required notice to the court.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. It must be **filed** with the **clerk of the circuit court** with the initial pleading in the family law case.

What should I do next?

A copy of the form must be served on the presiding judges, either the chief judge or the family law administrative judge, and all parties in the related cases. You should also keep a copy for your records. **Service** must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of these forms. The words that are in "**bold underline**" in these instructions are defined there. For further information, see Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d).

Special notes . . .

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida

Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms **must** also put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

Petitioner,
and

Respondent.

NOTICE OF RELATED CASES

1. Petitioner submits this Notice of Related Cases as required by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d). A related case may be an open or closed civil, criminal, guardianship, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, juvenile dependency, or domestic relations case. A case is "related" to this family law case if it involves any of the same parties, children, or issues and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; if it affects the court's jurisdiction to proceed; if an order in the related case may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or if an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier litigation.

[check **one** only]

☐ **There are no related cases.**

☐ **The following are the related cases (add additional pages if necessary):**

Related Case No. 1

Case Name(s): _____

Petitioner _____

Respondent _____

Case No.: _____ Division: _____

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

☐ Dissolution of Marriage

☐ Custody

☐ Child Support

☐ Juvenile Dependency

☐ Termination of Parental Rights

☐ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat

Violence or Stalking Injunctions

☐ Paternity

☐ Adoption

☐ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings

☐ Juvenile Delinquency

☐ Criminal

☐ Mental Health

☐ Other {specify} _____

State where case was decided or is pending: ____ Florida ____ Other: {specify} _____

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): _____

Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Relationship of cases check **all** that apply]:

____ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;

____ may affect court's jurisdiction;

____ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;

____ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: _____

Related Case No. 2

Case Name(s): _____

Petitioner _____

Respondent _____

Case No.: _____ Division: _____

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

____ Dissolution of Marriage

____ Paternity

____ Custody

____ Adoption

____ Child Support

____ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings

____ Juvenile Dependency

____ Juvenile Delinquency

____ Termination of Parental Rights

____ Criminal

____ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat

____ Mental Health

Violence or Stalking Injunctions

____ Other {specify} _____

State where case was decided or is pending: ____ Florida ____ Other: {specify} _____

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): _____

Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Relationship of cases check all that apply]:

____ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;

- ☐ may affect court's jurisdiction;
☐ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;
☐ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: _____

Related Case No. 3

Case Name(s): _____
 Petitioner _____
 Respondent _____
 Case No.: _____ Division: _____

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissolution of Marriage | <input type="checkbox"/> Paternity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Custody | <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support | <input type="checkbox"/> Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Dependency | <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Delinquency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Termination of Parental Rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violence or Stalking Injunctions | <input type="checkbox"/> Other {specify} _____ |

State where case was decided or is pending: ☐ Florida ☐ Other: {specify} _____

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): _____

Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Relationship of cases check all that apply]:

- ☐ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;
☐ may affect court's jurisdiction;
☐ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;
☐ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: _____

2. [check **one** only]

☐ I **do not** request coordination of litigation in any of the cases listed above.

_____ I **do** request coordination of the following cases: _____

3. [check **all** that apply]

_____ Assignment to one judge

_____ Coordination of existing cases

will conserve judicial resources and promote an efficient determination of these cases
because:_____.

4. The Petitioner acknowledges a continuing duty to inform the court of any cases in this or any other state that could affect the current proceeding.

Dated: _____

Petitioner's Signature

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail Address(es): _____

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I **CERTIFY** that I delivered a copy of this Notice of Related Cases to the _____ County Sheriff's Department or a certified process server for service on the Respondent, and [**check all used**]
() e-mailed () mailed () hand delivered, a copy to {name}_____, who is the
[**check all that apply**] () judge assigned to new case, () chief judge or family law administrative
judge, () {name}_____ a party to the related case, () {name}
_____, a party to the related case on {date}_____.

Signature of Petitioner/Attorney for Petitioner

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail Address(es): _____

Florida Bar Number: _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the {choose **only one**}: () Petitioner () Respondent.

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,

{name of business} _____,

{address} _____,

{city} _____ {state} _____, {telephone number} _____.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW
FORM 12.981(a)(2),
STEPPARENT ADOPTION: CONSENT OF ADOPTEE (03/15)**

When should this form be used?

This form must be completed and signed by the person being adopted, the adoptee, if he or she is **over 12 years of age**, unless the court, in the best interest of the minor excuses the minor's consent. It must be signed in the presence of a **notary public** or **deputy clerk** and two witnesses other than the notary public or deputy clerk.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where the **Joint Petition for Adoption by Stepparent**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.981(b)(1) is filed and keep a copy for your records.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

Special notes...

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF

{use name to be given to the child(ren)} Adoptee(s).

CONSENT OF ADOPTEE

1. I, {full legal name} _____, being over the age of 12, consent to my adoption by {name} _____, to be his/her legal child and heir at law.
2. I have been told of my right to choose a person who does not have an employment, professional, or personal relationship with the adoption entity or prospective adoptive parents to be present when this affidavit is executed and to sign it as a witness. The witness I selected is: {full legal name} _____.
3. {Choose only one}
() I consent to my name being legally changed to {specify} _____.
() I do **not** consent to a name change.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this consent and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____

Signature of Adoptee

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

Signature of Witness

Printed Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Home Address: _____

Driver's License No.: _____

State ID Card No.: _____

Signature of Witness

Printed Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Home Address: _____

Driver's License No.: _____

State ID Card No.: _____

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on
{date} _____

.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

{Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or
deputy clerk.}

_____ Personally known

_____ Produced identification

Type of identification produced _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the {choose only **one**} () adoptee () stepparent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,

{name of business} _____,

{address} _____,

{city} _____, {state} _____, {zip code} _____ {telephone number} _____.

.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW
FORM 12.981(c)(2),
STEPPARENT ADOPTION: CONSENT OF ADULT ADOPTEE'S SPOUSE
(02/18)**

When should this form be used?

This form must be completed by the spouse of an adult who is being adopted.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, the spouse of the adoptee should sign the form before a notary public or deputy clerk. You should file the original with the clerk of the circuit court in the county where the petition for adoption of an adult was filed and keep a copy for your records.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleading or other document electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

Special notes...

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

IN RE: THE ADOPTION OF

_____,
{use name to be given to adult} Adoptee(s).

STEPPARENT ADOPTION: CONSENT OF ADULT ADOPTEE'S SPOUSE

1. I, {full legal name} _____, am the spouse of
{full legal name} _____, who Petitioner,
{full legal name} _____ wishes to adopt.
2. I consent to the adoption of my spouse by Petitioner.
3. I understand my right to choose a person who does not have an employment, professional, or personal relationship with the adoption entity or the prospective adoptive parents to be present when this affidavit is executed and to sign it as a witness. The witness I selected is:
{full legal name} _____.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this consent and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____

Signature of Spouse
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____
Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

Signature of Witness
Printed Name: _____
Business Address: _____
Home Address: _____

Driver's License or
State ID Card No.: _____

Signature of Witness
Printed Name: _____
Business Address: _____
Home Address: _____

Driver's License or
State ID Card No.: _____

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

*{Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or
deputy clerk.}*

_____ Personally known
_____ Produced identification
_____ Type of identification produced _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the () stepparent () adult adoptee's spouse.

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,
{name of business} _____,
{address} _____,
{city} _____, *{state}* _____, *{zip code}* _____, *{telephone number}* _____.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE
FORM 12.910(a)
SUMMONS: PERSONAL SERVICE ON AN INDIVIDUAL
(11/20)**

When should this form be used?

This form should be used to obtain **personal service** on the other **party** when you begin your lawsuit. **Service** is required for **all** documents filed in your case. Service means giving a copy of the required papers to the other party using the procedure that the law requires. Generally, there are two ways to make service: (1) personal service, or (2) service by email, mail, or hand delivery. A third method for service is called **constructive service**; however, the relief a court may grant may be limited in a case where constructive service has been used.

The law requires that certain documents be served by **personal service** if personal service is possible. **Personal service** means that a summons (this form) and a copy of the forms you are filing with the court that must be personally served are delivered by a deputy sheriff or private process server

- a. directly to the other party, **or**
- b. to someone over the age of fifteen with whom the other party lives.

Personal service is required for **all petitions**, including petitions for modification. You cannot serve these papers on the other party yourself or by mail or hand delivery. Personal service must be made by the sheriff's department in the county where the other party lives or works or by a private process server certified in the county where the other party lives or works.

In many counties, there are private process servers who, for a fee, will personally serve the summons and other documents that require personal service. You should look under **process servers** in the yellow pages of the telephone book for a list of private process servers in your area. You may use a private process server to serve any paper required to be personally served in a family law case **except** a petition for injunction for protection against domestic or repeat violence.

How do I start?

When you begin your lawsuit, you need to complete this form (summons) and a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b). The forms should be typed or printed legibly in black ink. Next, you will need to take these forms and, if you have not already done so, **file** your petition with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where you live. You should keep a copy of the forms for your records. The clerk will sign the summons, and then the summons, a copy of the Instructions for Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), Summons: Personal Service on an Individual (11/20)

papers to be served, and the process service memorandum must be delivered to the appropriate sheriff's office or to a private process server for service on the other party.

IF THE OTHER PARTY LIVES IN THE COUNTY WHERE SUIT IS FILED: Ask the clerk in your county about any local procedures regarding service. Generally, if the other party lives in the county in which you are filing suit and you want the sheriff's department to serve the papers, you will file the summons along with a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), with the clerk and the clerk will forward those papers to the sheriff for service. Make sure that you attach a copy of the papers you want personally served to the summons. You may also need to provide the sheriff with a stamped envelope addressed to you. This will allow the sheriff to send the proof of service to you, after the sheriff serves your papers on the other party. However, in some counties the sheriff may send the proof of service directly to the clerk. If you are instructed to supply a self-addressed, stamped envelope and you receive the proof of service, you should file the proof of service with the clerk after you receive it from the sheriff. Also, you will need to find out how much the sheriff charges to serve the papers. Personal checks are not accepted. You should attach to the summons a cashier's check or money order made payable to the sheriff, and either give it to the clerk for delivery to the sheriff or send all of the paperwork and the fee to the sheriff yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. The costs for service may be waived if you are indigent.

If you want a private process server to serve the other party, you should still bring the summons to the clerk's office and have the clerk sign it for you. You should deliver the summons, along with the copy of your initial petition and any other papers to be served, and a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), to the private process server. The private process server will charge you a fee for serving the papers. After service is complete, proof of service by the private process server must be filed with the clerk. You should discuss how this will occur with the private process server.

IF THE OTHER PARTY LIVES IN ANOTHER COUNTY: If the other party lives in another county, service needs to be made by a sheriff in the county where the other party lives or by a private process server certified in the county where the other party lives. Make sure that you attach a copy of the papers you want personally served to the summons as well as the **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b). If you want the sheriff to serve the papers, the clerk may send your papers to that sheriff's office for you, or you may have to send the papers yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. Either way, you will need to provide the sheriff with a stamped envelope addressed to you. This will allow the sheriff to send the proof of service to you, after the sheriff serves your papers on the other party. You should file the proof of service with the clerk after you receive it from the sheriff. Also, you will need to find out how much the sheriff charges to serve the papers. Personal checks are not accepted. You should attach to the summons a cashier's check or money order made payable to the sheriff, and either give it to the clerk for delivery to the sheriff or send all of the paperwork and the fee to the sheriff yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. The costs for service may be waived if you are indigent.

If you want a private process server to serve the other party, you should still bring the summons to the clerk's office where the clerk will sign it for you. You should deliver the summons, along with the copy of your initial petition and any other papers to be served, and a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), to the private process server. The private process server will charge you a fee for serving the papers. After service is complete, proof of service by the Instructions for Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), Summons: Personal Service on an Individual (11/20)

private process server must be filed with the clerk. You should discuss how this will occur with the private process server.

IF THE OTHER PARTY CANNOT BE LOCATED OR DOES NOT LIVE IN FLORIDA: If, after you have made a diligent effort to locate the other party, you absolutely cannot locate the other party, you may serve the other party by publication. Service by publication is also known as constructive service. You may also be able to use constructive service if the other party does not live in Florida. **However, Florida courts have only limited jurisdiction over a party who is served by constructive service and may have only limited jurisdiction over a party living outside of Florida regardless of whether that party is served by constructive or personal service;** that is, the judge's power to order the other party to do certain things may be limited. For example, the judge may be able to grant your request for a divorce, but the judge may not be able to address issues such as child support, spousal support (alimony), or division of property or debts.

Regardless of the type of service used, if the other party once lived in Florida but is living outside of Florida now, you should include in your petition a statement regarding the length of time the party lived in Florida, if any, and when. For example: "Respondent last lived in Florida from {date} _____ to {date} _____."

This area of the law is very complex and you may need to consult with an attorney regarding the proper type of service to be used in your case if the other party does not live in Florida or cannot be located.

What happens when the papers are served on the other party?

The date and hour of service are written on the original summons and on all copies of it by the person making the service. The person who delivers the summons and copies of the petition must file a proof of service with the clerk or provide a proof of service to you for filing with the court. **It is your responsibility to make sure the proof of service has been returned to the clerk and placed in your case file.**

What should I do next?

A copy of this form must be filed with the court and served on the other party or his or her attorney. The copy you are serving to the other party must be either mailed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to the opposing party or his or her attorney on the same day indicated on the certificate of service. If it is mailed, it must be postmarked on the date indicated in the certificate of service. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you must review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at www.flcourts.org through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by email, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read “General Information for Self-Represented Litigants” found at the beginning of these forms. For further information regarding service of process, see chapters 48 and 49, Florida Statutes, and Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.070, as well as the instructions for **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage (No Child or Financial Support)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(1), **Notice of Action for Family Cases with Minor Child(ren)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(2), **Affidavit of Diligent Service and Inquiry**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b), and **Affidavit of Diligent Search**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(c).

Special notes . . .

If you have been unable to obtain proper service on the other party within **120 days** after filing your lawsuit, the court will dismiss your lawsuit against the other party unless you can show the court a good reason why service was not made within **120 days**. For this reason, if you had the local sheriff serve the papers, you should check with the clerk every couple of weeks after completing the service papers to see if service has been completed. You may need to supply the sheriff with a new or better address. If you had a private process server or a sheriff in another county serve the papers, you should be in contact with

that person or sheriff until you receive proof of service from that person or sheriff. You should then file the proof of service with the clerk immediately.

If the other party fails to respond, i.e., fails to file a written response with the court, within **20 days** after the service of the summons, you are entitled to request a **default**. See the instructions to **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922 (a), and **Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(b), for further information. You will need to file an **Affidavit of Military Service**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.912(b), before a default may be granted.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ 6TH _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ PINELLAS _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

SUMMONS: PERSONAL SERVICE ON AN INDIVIDUAL
ORDEN DE COMPARECENCIA: SERVICIO PERSONAL EN UN INDIVIDUO
CITATION: L'ASSIGNATION PERSONAL SUR UN INDIVIDUEL

TO/PARA/A: *{enter other party's full legal name}* _____,
{address (including city and state)/location for service} _____.

IMPORTANT

A lawsuit has been filed against you. You have **20 calendar days** after this summons is served on you to file a written response to the attached complaint/petition with the clerk of this circuit court, located at:

{street address} _____.

A phone call will not protect you. Your written response, including the case number given above and the names of the parties, must be **filed** if you want the Court to hear your side of the case.

If you do not file your written response on time, you may lose the case, and your wages, money, and property may be taken thereafter without further warning from the Court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may call

Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), Summons: Personal Service on an Individual (11/20)

an attorney referral service or a legal aid office (listed in the phone book).

If you choose to file a written response yourself, at the same time you file your written response to the Court, you must also serve a copy of your written response on the party serving this summons at:

{Name and address of party serving summons} _____
_____.

If the party serving summons has designated email address(es) for service or is represented by an attorney, you may designate email address(es) for service by or on you. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents, upon request.

You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Designation of Current Mailing and Email Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed to the address on record at the clerk's office.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

IMPORTANTE

Usted ha sido demandado legalmente. Tiene veinte (20) días, contados a partir del recibo de esta notificación, para contestar la demanda adjunta, por escrito, y presentarla ante este tribunal. Localizado en: _____. Una llamada telefónica no lo protegerá. Si usted desea que el tribunal considere su defensa, debe presentar su respuesta por escrito, incluyendo el número del caso y los nombres de las partes interesadas. Si usted no contesta la demanda a tiempo, pudiese perder el caso y podría ser despojado de sus ingresos y propiedades, o privado de sus derechos, sin previo aviso del tribunal. Existen otros requisitos legales. Si lo desea, usted puede consultar a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a una de las oficinas de asistencia legal que aparecen en la guía telefónica.

Si desea responder a la demanda por su cuenta, al mismo tiempo en que presente su respuesta ante el tribunal, usted debe enviar por correo o entregar una copia de su respuesta a la persona denominada abajo.

Si usted elige presentar personalmente una respuesta por escrito, en el mismo momento que usted presente su respuesta por escrito al Tribunal, usted debe enviar por correo o llevar una copia de su respuesta por escrito a la parte entregando esta orden de comparecencia a:

Nombre y dirección de la parte que entrega la orden de comparecencia: _____
_____.

Copias de todos los documentos judiciales de este caso, incluyendo las ordenes, estan disponibles en la
Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), Summons: Personal Service on an Individual (11/20)

oficina del Secretario de Juzgado del Circuito [Clerk of the Circuit Court's office]. Estos documentos pueden ser revisados a su solicitud.

Usted debe de mantener informada a la oficina del Secretario de Juzgado del Circuito de su direccion actual. (Usted puede presentar ____ el Formulario: Ley de Familia de la Florida 12.915, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, [Designation of Current Mailing and Email Address].) Los papeles que se presenten en el futuro en esta demanda judicial seran enviados por correo a la direccion que este registrada en la oficina del Secretario.

ADVERTENCIA: Regla 12.285 (Rule 12.285), de las Reglas de Procedimiento de Ley de Familia de la Florida [Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure], requiere cierta revelacion automatica de documentos e informacion. El incumplimiento, puede resultar en sanciones, incluyendo la desestimacion o anulacion de los alegatos.

IMPORTANT

Des poursuites judiciaires ont été entreprises contre vous. Vous avez 20 jours consécutifs à partir de la date de l'assignation de cette citation pour déposer une réponse écrite à la plainte ci-jointe auprès de ce tribunal. Qui se trouve à: {L'Adresse} _____. Un simple coup de téléphone est insuffisant pour vous protéger; vous êtes obligés de déposer votre réponse écrite, avec mention du numéro de dossier ci-dessus et du nom des parties nommées ici, si vous souhaitez que le tribunal entende votre cause. Si vous ne déposez pas votre réponse écrite dans le délai requis, vous risquez de perdre la cause ainsi que votre salaire, votre argent, et vos biens peuvent être saisis par la suite, sans aucun préavis ultérieur du tribunal. Il y a d'autres obligations juridiques et vous pouvez requérir les services immédiats d'un avocat. Si vous ne connaissez pas d'avocat, vous pourriez téléphoner à un service de référence d'avocats ou à un bureau d'assistance juridique (figurant à l'annuaire de téléphones).

Si vous choisissez de déposer vous-même une réponse écrite, il vous faudra également, en même temps que cette formalité, faire parvenir ou expédier une copie au carbone ou une photocopie de votre réponse écrite à la partie qui vous dépose cette citation.

Nom et adresse de la partie qui dépose cette citation: _____

Les photocopies de tous les documents tribunaux de cette cause, y compris des arrêts, sont disponibles au bureau du greffier. Vous pouvez consulter ces documents, sur demande.

Il faut aviser le greffier de votre adresse actuelle. (Vous pouvez déposer Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, Designation of Current Mailing and Email Address.) Les documents de l'avenir de ce procès seront envoyés à l'adresse que vous donnez au bureau du greffier.

ATTENTION: La règle 12.285, des règles de procédure du droit de la famille de la Floride exige que l'on remette certains renseignements et certains documents à la partie adverse. Tout refus de les fournir pourra donner lieu à des sanctions, y compris le rejet ou la suppression d'un ou de plusieurs actes de procédure.

THE STATE OF FLORIDA

TO EACH SHERIFF OF THE STATE: You are commanded to serve this summons and a copy of the complaint in this lawsuit on the above-named person.

DATED: _____

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

(SEAL)

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.910(b), PROCESS SERVICE MEMORANDUM (11/15)

When should this form be used?

You should use this form to give the sheriff's department (or private process server) instructions for serving the other **party** in your case with the **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), and other papers to be served. On this form you can tell the sheriff's department the best times to find the person at work and/or at home. You can also include a map to the other person's home or work place to help the sheriff find the person and deliver the summons. Do not forget to attach to the summons a copy of your initial petition and any other papers you want personally served on the other party.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your petition was filed and attach a copy to the **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a). You should also keep a copy for your records.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms. You should read the instructions for **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), for additional information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at www.flcourts.org through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT

REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Special notes...

If you fear that disclosing your address would put you in danger because you are the victim of sexual battery, aggravated child abuse, stalking, aggravated stalking, harassment, aggravated battery, or domestic violence, you should complete a **Request for Confidential Filing of Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(h), file it with the clerk, and write confidential in the space provided on the petition.

Nonlawyer. Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent,

PROCESS SERVICE MEMORANDUM

TO: _____ Sheriff of _____ County, Florida; _____ Division
_____ Private process server: _____

Please serve the *{name of document(s)}* _____

in the above-styled cause upon:

Party: *{full legal name}* _____

Address or location for service: _____

Work Address: _____

If the party to be served owns, has, and/or is known to have guns or other weapons, describe what type of weapon(s): _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

Dated: _____

Signature of Party

*Printed Name: _____

*Address: _____

*City, State, Zip: _____

*Telephone Number: _____

*Fax Number: _____

*Designated E-mail Address(es) _____

*** Please see the Special Notes section in the instructions to this form regarding Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(h), Request for Confidential Filing of Address, which may be used if you need to keep your addresses or telephone numbers confidential for safety reasons.**

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the Petitioner. This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,

{name of business} _____,

{address} _____,

{city} _____, *{state}* _____, *{zip code}* _____, *{telephone number}* _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.923, NOTICE OF HEARING (GENERAL) (11/15)

When should this form be used?

Anytime you have set a hearing before a judge, you must send notice of the hearing to the other party.

IMPORTANT: If your hearing has been set before a general magistrate, you should use **Notice of Hearing Before General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(c). If your hearing has been set before a child support enforcement hearing officer, you should use **Notice of Hearing (Child Support Hearing Officer)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.921.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should file the original with the clerk of the circuit court in the county where your case was filed and keep a copy for your records.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

What should I do next?

A copy of this form must be mailed, e-mailed, or hand delivered to the other party in your case. If a default has been entered, you must still send this form to the other party to notify the other party of the final hearing.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at www.flcourts.org through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms. For further information on serving notices of hearing, see rule 1.090(d), Florida Civil Rules of Procedure.

Special notes...

To set a hearing date and time, you will usually have to make a good-faith effort to coordinate a mutually convenient date and time for you, the other parties in the case, and the judge, except in certain emergency situations. Some circuits may have additional procedural requirements that you must follow when you notify the court and other parties of your scheduled hearing. Therefore, before you complete this form, you should contact the clerk's office, family law intake staff, or judicial assistant for information regarding the proper procedure to follow.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent,

NOTICE OF HEARING (GENERAL)

[fill in **all** blanks]

TO: *{name of other party}*: _____

There will be a hearing before Judge *{name}* _____,

on *{date}* _____ at *{time}* _____ m., in Room _____ of the _____

County Courthouse, on the following issues: _____

_____.

_____ hour(s)/ _____ minutes have been reserved for this hearing.

This part is to be filled out by the court or to be filled in with information you obtained from the court:

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact:

***{identify applicable court personnel by name, address, and telephone number}* at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.**

If you are represented by an attorney or plan to retain an attorney for this matter, you should notify the attorney of this hearing.

If this matter is resolved, the moving party shall contact the judge's office to cancel this hearing.

I certify that a copy of this document was () e-mailed () mailed () faxed () hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} _____.

Other party or his/her attorney:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

Signature of Party

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in all blanks] This form was prepared for the: {choose only **one**} () Petitioner () Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____,

{name of business} _____,

{address} _____,

{city} _____, {state} _____, {zip code} _____, {telephone number} _____

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE
FORM 12.999
FINAL DISPOSITION FORM
(03/17)**

When should this form be used?

This form is filed by the petitioner or respondent for the use of the clerk of the court for the purpose of reporting judicial workload data under section 25.075, Florida Statutes. When your case is completed, the petitioner or respondent must complete this form and file it with the clerk.

What should I do next?

This form must be typed or printed in black ink. After completing and signing this form, you should then file it and keep a copy for your records.

A copy of this form must be e-mailed, mailed, or hand delivered to the other party(ies) in your case.

Instructions for completing this form

I. Case Style. Enter the name of the court, the case number assigned at the time of the filing of the petition, counterpetition, or motion, the name of the judge assigned, and the names of the petitioner and respondent.

II. Means of Final Disposition. Place an “x” on the appropriate line before the major category and the appropriate subcategory, if applicable. The following are the definitions of the disposition categories.

- A. Dismissed Before Hearing or Trial. The case is settled, voluntarily dismissed, or otherwise disposed of before a hearing or trial is held.
- B. Dismissed Under Settlement, Before Hearing or Trial. Before hearing or trial, the case is voluntarily dismissed by the petitioner, respondent, or movant after a settlement.
- C. Dismissal Under Mediated Settlement, Before Hearing or Trial. The case is voluntarily dismissed by the petitioner or respondent after a settlement is reached with mediation before a hearing or trial is held.
- D. Other, Before Hearing or Trial. The case is dismissed before a hearing or trial in an action that does not fall into one of the other disposition categories on this form.
- E. Dismissal Before Hearing or Trial. The case is dismissed by a judge voluntarily after a hearing or trial is held.

- F. Dismissed Under a Settlement, After Hearing or Trial. The case is voluntarily dismissed by the petitioner, respondent, or movant after a settlement is reached without mediation after a hearing or trial is held.
- G. Dismissal Under a Mediated Settlement, After Hearing or Trial. The case is voluntarily dismissed by the petitioner, respondent, or movant after a settlement is reached with mediation after a hearing or trial.
- H. Other, After Hearing or Trial. The case is dismissed after hearing in an action that does not fall into the categories listed on this form.
- I. Disposed by **Default**. A respondent chooses not to or fails to contest the petitioner's allegations and a judgment against the respondent is entered by the court.
- J. Disposed by Judge. A judgment or disposition is reached by the judge in a case that is not dismissed and in which no trial has been held. Includes stipulations by the parties, conditional judgments, summary judgment after hearing, and any manner in which a judgment is entered, excluding cases disposed of by default as in category I. above.
- K. Disposed by Nonjury Trial. The case is disposed as a result of a contested trial in which there is no jury and in which the judge determines both the issues of fact and the law in the case.
- L. Disposed by Jury Trial. Any part of the case is disposed as a result of a jury trial (considered the beginning of a jury trial to be when the jurors and alternates are selected and sworn).
- M. Other. The case is consolidated, submitted to mediation or arbitration, transferred, or otherwise disposed of by any other means not listed in categories (A) to (L).

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read **General Information for Self-Represented Litigants** found at the beginning of these forms. The words that are in **bold underline** in these instructions are defined there.

FINAL DISPOSITION FORM

I. Case Style

{Name of Court} _____

{Petitioner} _____

{Case number} _____

{Respondent} _____

{Judge} _____

II. Means of Final Disposition

Place an "x" on the line for the major category and one subcategory, if applicable only.

_____ Dismissed before hearing/trial

_____ Dismissed pursuant to settlement, before hearing or trial

_____ Dismissed under a mediated settlement before hearing or trial

_____ Other, before hearing or trial

_____ Dismissed after hearing or trial

_____ Dismissed pursuant to a settlement, after hearing or trial

_____ Dismissed pursuant to a mediated settlement, after hearing or trial

_____ Other after hearing or trial

_____ Disposed by default

_____ Disposed by judge

_____ Disposed by nonjury trial

_____ Disposed by jury trial

_____ Other *{specify}* _____.

Date: _____

Signature of Attorney or Party

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail address(es): _____

Fax number: _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: *{choose only one}* () Petitioner () Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} _____

{name of business} _____

{address} _____.

{city} _____, *{state}* _____, *{telephone number}* _____.